

Ripped from the ROUNDUP

Ripped straight from the pages of old Space News Roundups, here's what happened at JSC on this date:

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The Gemini spacecraft that will carry crewmen Frank Borman and Jim Lovell on a two-week earth-orbital mission was mechanically mated Monday with its launch vehicle following activation of two replaced fuel cell sections.

The Gemini VII/VI mission, as now planned, calls for Gemini VII to be launched a week from tomorrow with the primary objective of 14 days of space flight. Gemini VI spacecraft and its launch vehicle will then be re-erected on Pad 19 as soon as launch damage can be repaired.

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Ten employees of the NASA Manned Spacecraft Center have applied for a joint patent on a simple and practical device and process for recovering water and its constituent elements, hydrogen and oxygen, from lunar soil.

The device is based on a chemical process using hydrogen and solar energy to reduce oxides containing iron, which are constituents of lunar soil, to produce water vapor, which can in turn, be electrolyzed to yield oxygen and hydrogen.

Samples of the lunar material returned by the Apollo 11 and 12 astronauts contain significant proportions of an iron-titanium oxide called ilmenite.

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When *Atlantis* glided to a landing at Kennedy Space Center on Monday, it ended an eight-day mission that marked several milestones in the continuing program of joint U.S./Russian cooperation in space.

"I think we left a gateway open for the next five flights," Commander Ken Cameron said. "That's what it's all about - one step at a time toward the [International Space] Station."

The STS-74 astronauts successfully attached an 8,000-pound, 15.4-foot-long docking module to Mir's Kristall module. The docking module will serve as the permanent docking port for all future shuttle/Mir missions.



Rigging and Welding Specialists named NASA's Minority Subcontractor of the Year

NASA Administrator Daniel S. Goldin presented awards to three minority contractors including Rigging and Welding Specialists, Inc., a subcontractor to Brown & Root Services Pioneer that provides specialized transportation services to JSC, during the agency's annual Minority Business and Advocates Awards Ceremony September 26 at NASA Headquarters.

NASA named RWS Minority Subcontractor of the Year. Charles Fayle, CEO and president of the company, accepted the award.

"Being presented this award by the NASA administrator in the presence of my family and employees was a very special experience," Fayle said. "The extraordinary expression of confidence signified by this award is greatly appreciated. RWS is committed to excellence, and working at NASA presents daily challenges with unlimited opportunities to excel. RWS is proud to be a part of the BRSP team, and we will continually strive to maintain a level of performance worthy of this prestigious award."

RWS, a Native American-owned contractor with 16 employees headquartered in Highlands, Texas, is responsible for transporting critical and sensitive space flight articles in support of various Space Shuttle and International Space Station Programs. The company loads and off-loads aircraft, barges and commercial carrier vehicles containing mission-critical, one-of-a-kind spacecraft components, test articles, simulators, shuttle and Orbiter trainers, and space-flight hardware such as crew modules. RWS is also responsible for handling the space station equipment being furnished by the international partners building the International Space Station.

The company's safety program has been a key element in having safely performed approximately 270 "critical lifts" during



NASA Administrator Daniel S. Goldin, left, presents the Minority Subcontractor of the Year Award to Charles Fayle, CEO and president of Rigging and Welding Specialists, Inc.

the past three years. The company has had no OSHA recordable or lost time injuries since July 1, 1997, and is pursuing OSHA Voluntary Protection Program recognition.

RWS was nominated by BRSP and is its subcontractor for rigging and heavy hauling support services at JSC. The company has supported BRSP in the performance of its Base Operations Support Services Contract since 1997.

"I am delighted that RWS was selected for this award," said Frank Fort, BRSP logistics manager. "RWS is customer oriented and does an excellent job of planning and coordinating critical work requirements with various JSC organiza-

tions. It possesses the technical knowledge and the ingenuity necessary to safely perform uniquely sensitive rigging requirements. This award was very much deserved, and I am proud of their outstanding accomplishments."

BRSP provides a wide spectrum of services at JSC: program management, operations and maintenance of mission critical facilities, utilities and life-support systems, engineering, construction, logistical support, transportation, critical lifts of one-of-a-kind space hardware, environmental management, physical security, grounds maintenance and custodial services. ■

Brown & Root Services Pioneer earns ISO 14001 certification

Brown & Root Services Pioneer continued toward its goal of being the Brown & Root Services' center of excellence for operations, maintenance and logistics by achieving ISO 14001 certification of its environmental management system on September 15.

"There is great satisfaction when an independent third-party certifies your commitment to operational excellence," said John Stout, vice president of BRSP's Operations Maintenance and Logistics Product Service Line.

BRSP has now achieved all three major third-party certifications: ISO 9001 for its Quality Management System, Voluntary Protection Program "Merit" for its safety program and now ISO 14001. BRSP is the only Halliburton site to achieve all three certifications.

"It is especially gratifying when you realize that operational excellence is the byproduct of a management team committed to the concept of continuous improvement," explained Stout. "The piece that pulls it all together is the project's employees who believe in their management team, support the concept of operational excellence, and integrate it into their daily work."

This environmental certification recognizes BRSP's sound environmental performance across its wide spectrum of services: program management, operations and maintenance of mission critical facilities,

utilities and life support systems, engineering, construction, logistical support, transportation, critical lifts of one-of-a-kind space hardware, environmental management, physical security, grounds maintenance and custodial services.

BRSP based its environmental policy on pollution prevention, waste minimization, compliance with all rules and regulations, and continuous improvement. The BRSP management team identified the environmental aspects of all its activities and services and determined which ones have or can have significant impacts on the environment. The team then focused on setting environmental objectives and targets to reduce hazardous waste and improve pollution prevention. The critical element of success is the employees' understanding of how their work can impact the environment and their role in environmental compliance and pollution prevention.

"Quality is a never-ending quest, and Continuous Process Improvement is a never-ending effort to discover and eliminate the main causes of problems," said Dick Castleberry, BRSP project manager.

"The diverse, empowered team at JSC is accountable for delivering quality service, safely and on time, while preserving the environment. They have met the challenge as acknowledged by the International Standards Organization and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration." ■

Another Star is born

Just more than a year since JSC received its commendation, Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC) has received its own VPP Star site certification. John Miles, OSHA Region 6 regional administrator presented the flag to SAIC at a ceremony October 26.

J. D. Howell, Jr., SR&QA Contract program manager, Derek Robins, SR&QA Contract safety representative, Kathleen Leonard and Les Caldwell, Employee Safety Committee representatives, received the flag on behalf of SAIC.

This is the first SAIC corporate site to earn the STAR certification.

According to Janet Reister, SAIC institutional safety assistant, the flag will be rotated through SAIC Team SR&QA contract office spaces so all employees "can enjoy it and be proud of their efforts to earn the flag." ■

